



Town of Groton, Connecticut

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Town Council

Mayor James L. Streeter, Councilors Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Catherine Kolnaski, Deborah B. Monteiro, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Paulann H. Sheets, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, May 18, 2010

7:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

REGULAR MEETING

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Streeter.

Members Present: Mayor Streeter, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger, Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher and Office Assistant Lori Watrous.

II. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Salute to the Flag was led by Mary Kelly.

III. RECOGNITION, AWARDS & MEMORIALS

2010-0101 Proclamation Honoring Doug Perina

Read

The proclamation was read by Councilor Flax, then Mayor Streeter presented the proclamation to Mr. Perina and thanked him for his faithful service to the Town.

2010-0114 Proclamation Commemorating Flag Day

Read

The proclamation was read by Mayor Streeter.

IV. RECEIPT OF CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Mary Kelly, 40 Plant Street, President of the Groton Animal Foundation (GAF), gave a brief update. GAF has been instrumental in purchasing furniture and equipment for the Groton Animal Shelter, as well as subsidizing its medical needs. Ms. Kelly announced that GAF will be hosting a wine tasting fund-raiser on June 5, 2010, with proceeds going to its emergency medical fund.

John Valentine, 764 Groton Long Point Road, is concerned about potential injuries and damage from falling tree limbs due to hurricanes and wind storms. He believes that there should be a regulated tree removal and cutting program for all trees that encroach upon Groton's roadways and power lines.

V. RESPONSES TO CITIZENS' PETITIONS, COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

In answer to Councilor Sheets' question, Mr. Valentine stated that he has contacted the power company. Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P) acknowledged that there is a problem, but cutting and trimming trees is a budgetary matter.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Approval of Minutes

2010-0116 Approval of Minutes (Town Council)

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the Town Council meeting of May 4, 2010 are hereby accepted

and approved.

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

b. Administrative Items

2010-0110 Special Trust Fund Contributions

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPECIAL TRUST FUNDS

RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts contributions to the Town as follows:

Various Donations - \$163.76 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

Groton Utilities Matching Funds - \$1,058.29 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

George Marshall - \$100.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Marlene Terry Ziegler in memory of Joyce Tatro - \$100.00 - Library Discretionary

Various Donations - \$57.85 - Groton Utilities Energy Assistance Program

John and Linnie Lawrence - \$500.00 - Social Services Discretionary

Catherine Kolnaski - \$100.00 - Spicer Trust Fund

This Matter was Adopted on the Consent Calendar.

c. Deletions from the Town Council Referral List

2010-0117 Appointment of John Sutherland to Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2010-0111 Mystic Education Center Trail

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

2009-0254 Town Historian

This Matter was Deleted from Referral List - Action to be taken on the Consent Calendar.

Passed The Consent Calendar

A motion was made by Mayor Streeter, seconded by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., to adopt the Consent Calendar, including all the preceding items marked as having been adopted on the Consent Calendar.

The motion carried unanimously

VII. COMMUNICATION REPORTS (Other than Committee Reports)

a. Town Councilors

Councilors have attended or watched one or more sessions of the Annual RTM Budget meeting.

Councilors continue to receive emails regarding the budget.

Councilor Watson and Mayor Streeter have both visited former Town Historian Carol Kimball, who appears to be in good spirits.

Councilor Watson, Councilor Flax, and Councilor Monteiro received a letter from the Groton Parks Foundation requesting a meeting to discuss available grant money to be used at the Copp Property.

Councilor Watson attended a Southeastern Connecticut Water Authority meeting.

Councilor Sheets requested information pertaining to what data is being captured by the camera at the entrance to Groton Long Point and the intended uses of that data. The Town Manager will add this item to the next agenda with the Groton Long Point Association.

Councilor Flax has received questions concerning the disposition of closed schools.

Councilor Kolnaski attended a Ledge Light Health District meeting.

Mayor Streeter attended a Thames Street Advisory Committee meeting, a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) meeting, a Children First Groton meeting, a Health Equity Alliance Workshop, the Annual Avery Memorial Association archeological dig, and a book discussion of "A Pearl in the Storm" at the Mystic Arts Center. The Mayor noted that there is a public informational meeting regarding the bridge replacement on Route 184 on May 27, 2010.

b. Clerk of the Representative Town Meeting

The RTM is continuing its Annual Budget Meeting sessions. By Charter, the RTM must conclude its deliberations on the budget no later than May 25, 2010.

c. Clerk of the Council

The Town Clerk stated that the Parks and Recreation Department is preparing for the parade on July 4, 2010, and she asked Councilors to consider participating.

d. Town Manager

The Town Manager stated that Group I and the Committee of the Whole will meet next week at their usual time, but Group II has been cancelled. He noted that the Annual Student Leadership Breakfast will be on May 26, 2010, and the Memorial Day "Click It or Ticket" campaign will be from May 24, 2010, thru June 6, 2010. The Town Manager announced that Groton has received its sixteenth consecutive Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) award.

e. Town Attorney

No report.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Community & Cultural Development - Chairman Peruzzotti

Councilor Peruzzotti read the minutes of the meeting held on May 11, 2010, which are on file in the Town Clerk's office.

b. Economic Development - Chairman Johnson

No meeting, no report.

c. Education/Health & Social Services - Chairman Kolnaski

No meeting, no report.

d. Environment/Energy - Chairman Sheets

Councilor Sheets reported on the meeting held on May 11, 2010.

e. Finance - Chairman O'Beirne

No meeting, no report.

f. Personnel/Appointments/Rules - Chairman Flax

Councilor Flax read the minutes of the meeting held on May 11, 2010, which are on file in the Town Clerk's Office.

g. Public Safety - Chairman Monteiro

No meeting, no report.

h. Public Works/Recreation - Chairman Watson

No meeting, no report.

i. Committee of the Whole - Mayor Streeter

Mayor Streeter stated that the resolutions on tonight's agenda are a result of the last Committee of the Whole meeting.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS**2010-0117 Appointment of John Sutherland to Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community**

RESOLUTION APPOINTING JOHN SUTHERLAND TO THE TASK FORCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

RESOLVED, that John Sutherland, 32 Neptune Drive, is hereby appointed to the Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community for a term ending 12/2/2010.

A motion was made by Councilor Flax, seconded by Councilor Peruzzotti, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2010-0111 Mystic Education Center Trail

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXPLORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAIL SYSTEM AT THE MYSTIC EDUCATION CENTER

WHEREAS, the 2005 Groton Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails Master Plan recommended the establishment of a trail system on the state-owned Mystic Education Center property with a connection to the Town-owned open space on River Road to the north, and

WHEREAS, the Conservation Commission endorsed such a trail as early as 2001 and reiterated their support for this trail at a number of recent meetings, now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager is hereby authorized to enter into discussions with the State of Connecticut Department of Public Works to explore the feasibility of constructing trails on the Mystic Education Center property on Oral School Road.

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Kolnaski, that this matter be Adopted.

The motion carried unanimously

2009-0254 Town Historian

RESOLUTION REGARDING APPOINTMENT OF TOWN HISTORIAN

WHEREAS, the Town's long-time Town Historian has resigned; and

WHEREAS, a question has arisen whether the position of Town Historian is to be considered an "Agency, Authority, Board, Commission, Committee, Council" ("ABC") as defined by the "Glossary of Terms" in the Groton Town Charter approved on November 4, 2008; and

WHEREAS, if the position of Town Historian is considered an ABC, § 3.5.2 of the Charter would prohibit any "elected official" or any "appointed member of any permanent town ABC, which was created pursuant to the specific provisions of a CGS..." from simultaneously serving as Town Historian; and

WHEREAS, in part because the Town Historian is not compensated by the Town for his/her service and has no power to make policy or otherwise affect Town or private rights and obligations, and because the position of Town Historian requires a body of knowledge and experience not likely to be possessed by more than a few individuals at any one time, the Town Council does not wish to exclude individuals currently serving as "elected officials" or as members of any permanent Town ABC from consideration from appointment to the position of Town Historian; and

WHEREAS, § 8.1.6 of the Charter provides that "descriptions of individual ABC shall be...delineated in a Council-approved Town publication..." to be known as the "Guidebook to the Agencies, Authorities, Boards, Commissions, Committees and Councils." ("Guidebook"); and

WHEREAS, the position of Town Historian is not "delineated" in the Guidebook and this is the first case requiring the application of § 3.5.2 and § 8.1.6 to any particular position.

NOW THEREFORE, be it:

RESOLVED, that for these reasons, and for purposes of the position of Town Historian only, the Town Council affirms that § 3.5.2 of the Charter does not prohibit an "elected official" or a "appointed member of any permanent Town ABC which was created pursuant to the...CGS..." from being appointed to and serving in the position of Town Historian, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Manager is authorized to begin an active solicitation of Town Historian candidates.

A motion was made by Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., seconded by Councilor Watson, that this matter be Adopted.

Mayor Streeter stated that he will not be voting on this resolution, due to the fact that he may be interested in this position.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Votes: In Favor: 8 - Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Kolnaski, Councilor Monteiro, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Sheets and Councilor Watson
Abstain: 1 - Mayor Streeter

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor O'Beirne requested an update from the Ethics Committee. Councilor Flax stated that he will report on the committee's progress at the next meeting.

Suspension of the Rules

A motion to suspend the rules to allow Chairman Zell Steever to discuss upcoming public sessions of the Task Force on Climate Control and Sustainable Community was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Sheets and so voted unanimously.

Chairman Steever gave a brief summary of four sessions that will be sponsored by the Task Force on Climate Change and Sustainable Community. The purpose of these sessions is to educate the public, solicit suggestions and concerns, and share ideas. Mr. Steever stated that a summer intern will be hired for benchmarking and creating a carbon footprint. Funding for this consultant will be from the grant that was received from the Department of Energy (DOE). All four sessions will be broadcast by GMTV.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Monteiro and so voted unanimously.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Council*

Lori Watrous, Office Assistant